

Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-18, and add new claims 19-35, so that the claims read as follows:

1-18. (cancelled)

19. (new) A process for producing a connecting element for sealing and non-releasable connection to a hollow body of thermoplastic material, the process comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a laminate of thermoplastic material from a plate-shaped, multi-layer, semi-finished product or excess extrudate from a multi-layer perform in a co-extrusion blow molding process;

(b) forming a multi-layer hollow body by a blow molding operation;

(c) separately forming a connecting element in a press shaping step by press shaping the laminate of thermoplastic material between two mating platens; and

(d) subsequently non-releasably sealing and connecting the separately-formed connecting element to the hollow body.

20. (new) The process according to claim 19, wherein the two mating platens comprise male and female mold portions.

21. (new) The process according to claim 19, wherein the press shaping step is performed in one working operation with the blow molding operation.

22. (new) The process according to claim 19, wherein the laminate has a low level of permeability to hydrocarbons.

23. (new) The process according to claim 22, wherein the laminate comprises at least one barrier layer for hydrocarbons.

24. (new) The process according to claim 23, wherein the at least one barrier layer is at least almost completely embedded into the laminate.

25. (new) The process according to claim 23, wherein the connecting element includes a cylindrical portion and the barrier layer extends at least in a region of the cylindrical portion of the connecting element near an inside wall thereof.

26. (new) The process according to claim 23, wherein the laminate comprises at least first and second barrier layers.

27. (new) The process according to claim 26, wherein the connecting element has a main body substantially comprising polyethylene and the barrier layers are embedded in the main body.

28. (new) The process according to claim 26, wherein the barrier layers comprise EVOH (ethylene vinyl alcohol).

29. (new) The process according to claim 22, wherein the hollow body is a fuel tank.

30. (new) The process according to claim 29, wherein the connecting element is in a form of an insert adapted for fitting to the fuel tank in sealed relationship therewith.

31. (new) The process according to claim 30, wherein the sealing and connecting step comprises joining the thermoplastic materials of the insert and the fuel tank.

32. (new) The process according to claim 31, where the joining comprises welding the insert to the fuel tank

33. (new) The process according to claim 32, wherein the welding is selected from the group consisting of hot plate welding, butt welding, friction welding, and sealing with heat reflectors.

34. (new) The process according to claim 19, wherein the press shaping step comprises press shaping the perform in a first heating step to a definitive shape of the connecting element.

35. (new) The process according to claim 19, wherein the perform is extruded in a form of the tube having oppositely disposed walls which are pressed against each other in the press shaping step.